
Session 7 (Day 4 All Day)

Local Government Sector, Private Sector, NGO Sector

Session Overview

The fourth day of the course connects the concepts that participants have learned to real situations through a field practicum. The field practicum provides an opportunity for participants to get out of the classroom and explore local economic development in further depth. Field opportunities in the original course included meeting with local government officials, meeting with the directors of a nongovernmental organization (NGO) focused on economic development, and visiting with private firms.

By the end of the day, participants should be able to link the concepts presented in the course thus far with the real-life issues discussed during the field practicum. A wrap-up session is critical to drawing these linkages.

In other versions of this course, if a field practicum is considered useful, trainers should think carefully about the specific objectives that would be served, as well as the types of institutions most useful to visit. See additional tips for planning and preparing for site visits in the Course Overview.

Because the original course did not focus on a real-life situation or real problem, the field practicum was used as a means of linking theory to practice by demonstrating successful application of principles. In a seminar designed around an economic development project, a field practicum could probably be omitted.

Session Objectives

- < To learn, in further depth, how institutions in one community can affect the community's economic conditions.
- < To have community residents and representatives directly address the particular issues and questions that participants have at this stage in the course.



Trainer's Notes

2½ hours Site Visit Preparation and Presentations

During this session, participants hear from one of three presenters, each focusing on a different sector of the community (the local government, business, or non-governmental sector). The purpose of the morning session is to provide participants with an opportunity to prepare for afternoon site visits.

Prior to the session, participants should sign up for the site they would like to visit. They should be given a choice among the options that have been arranged. To ensure that there is a good mix at each of the three sites, ask for a first and second choice.

Presenters should discuss what the problems or economic conditions were like before any special emphasis was placed on economic development. They should state clearly how the actions their organization took resulted in new investment by private firms (either existing firms or firms that started up). The nature of their working relationship with the other sectors should also be included in their presentations.

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| <i>5 min</i> | 1. Begin the day with an overview of the agenda and a brief discussion of the expectations and objectives of the field practicum. Emphasize that participants will get the most out of the site visits if they have thought about what they have learned thus far and are prepared to connect what they see at the sites to these concepts. They should thus be prepared to ask questions. |
| <i>30 min</i> | 2. Divide the group into three groups according to which site they will be visiting in the afternoon. Have the members of each group meet to discuss their expectations and to list the key questions that they feel could be addressed during the site visit. These might be questions that participants had prior to the course, as well as those that have arisen as they have delved into the subject matter. Suggest that each group select a spokesperson who can consolidate the group's issues into one list of points they want to make sure are covered. Allow groups 25 minutes to develop the list of questions or issues. |
| <i>10 min</i> | 3. Reconvene the whole group. Have the mayor or other city official welcome the group and give a brief description of the role that he or she has played in arranging for the panel discussions and site visits. This will help set the stage for the learning that is about to take place. |
| <i>5 min</i> | 4. Introduce the three presenters. Briefly describe the programs that they will discuss. |

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| <i>90 min</i> | 5. Allow panelists to make their presentations, telling the story of the actions they and their organization have taken to improve the economic base of their community. Presenters should provide concrete examples of how their actions yielded benefits and of how they have overcome obstacles. They should also focus on the partnerships among the three sectors, and how working together has furthered their efforts. Encourage questions from the group after each presentation. Each presentation should be limited to half an hour (including questions from the audience). |
| <i>10 min</i> | 6. Conclude with a summary of the discussion, emphasizing how the presentations relate to what has been learned in the course. |
| <i>5 min</i> | 7. When all presenters have finished and answered questions from the audience, explain that the afternoon session will take participants to a location where they can witness what the panelists have discussed. Briefly discuss the logistics of this session. |

3 hours Site Visits and Small-Group Discussions

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| <i>5 min</i> | 1. Remind the participants of the questions they prepared in the morning to assist their group analyze the role of each of the three sectors. Ask if there are any points they want clarified from the morning. |
| <i>90 min</i> | 2. Divide into three groups, according to the sector participants have chosen to visit. In the original training course, site visits took place at a business incubator and re-training center, an industrial park, and an NGO that provided rehabilitation training to disabled people. Encourage participants to ask questions of the people they meet at the site. |
| <i>30 min</i> | 3. After the site visit, ask participants to meet in their small groups. Explain that you would like everyone to learn about all three sectors by having groups share with one another what they have learned. Each group is to identify the key things they learned at the site visit, focusing particular attention on how these might be applicable to their own situations or communities. Explain that they will have 30 minutes to discuss what they have learned. |
| <i>45 min</i> | 4. Reconvene the whole group. Ask each small group to report on its discussion, focusing particular attention on what they learned at their site visit and how they plan to apply what they have learned. After each group's presentation, encourage questions from other participants. |
| <i>10 min</i> | 5. Conclude the day's session with an overview of the discussions that have taken place. Summarize the day's reports. Demonstrate how the findings in each of the group reports link to some key aspect of the theoretical part of the course. Highlight any comments made regarding cooperation between the three sectors. |